Conservation Connections

News and Events from the Missouri Department of Conservation • June 2015

What's Wrong With My Evergreen Tree?

s a community forester, I am frequently asked to help diagnose problems with sick trees. Without question, the most common problems involve evergreen trees — usually eastern white pine. Evergreens are popular for use in the landscape for obvious reasons but can also be some of the most problematic trees. So why all the problems?

The only species of evergreen native to the St. Louis area is eastern redcedar, sometimes referred to as just "cedar." Shortleaf pine occurs in the woodlands of southern Jefferson County but is more prevalent in the southern third of the state. Plants grown outside of their native locale are more susceptible to stress from adverse soil and climatic conditions. More stress means greater susceptibility to insect and disease attack.

Most evergreens commonly used in the urban/suburban landscape prefer a loose, well-drained soil. Soils in the city and suburbs have been disrupted and compacted. Compacted soils do not drain quickly and have limited amounts of oxygen. Soil oxygen is important because plant roots need to breathe. Soil low in oxygen forces plants to develop roots closer to the surface where oxygen is more available. This causes increased competition with turf for water and nutrients if the tree is planted in the yard. The upper portion of soil also dries more quickly than deep down possibly resulting in more drought stress.

It may sound like I'm preaching doom and gloom for all evergreens, but this simply isn't the case. Understand that all plants have certain preferences for soil texture, moisture availability, light exposure, temperature extremes, and other site conditions. Planting the right plant in the right place minimizes stress but doesn't eliminate it. Evergreens in our local landscape will not have their usual longevity due to the limiting factors I've already mentioned. If you realize that your eastern white pine may provide you with 15–25 years of useful life before it succumbs to stress, you can plan your landscape accordingly.

By MARK GRUEBER, community forester

Instead of planting a pine tree, consider one of the following alternatives:

- "Canaerti" or "Burkii" Juniper
- baldcypress
- American holly
- arrowwood
- blackhaw viburnums.

Bridge maintenance on the Meramec River bridges on I-44 near I-270 will significantly impact traffic flow late spring through summer. Please keep this in mind when planning your visit to Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center. You can find weekly lane closures once the project is started by visiting: http://www.modot.org/stlouis/road_construction/weeklyupdate.htm

Jay Henges Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

1100 Antire Road, High Ridge, MO 63049 • mdc.mo.gov/node/299



From the east/St. Louis I-44 west to Beaumont Antire Road, exit 269. Left over I-44 to Antire Road. Right on Antire. One hundred feet to entrance.

From the west/Eureka I-44 east to Beaumont Antire Road, exit 269. Follow exit lane around to top.

HOURS:

April 1 – November 30 Wednesday: 11 a.m. – 7:30 p.m. Thursday and Saturday: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Friday and Sunday: 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

December 1 – March 31 Wednesday – Sunday: 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Programs are free. Call **636-938-9548** or email **henges.range@mdc.mo.gov** with your name and phone number to sign up for a program requiring registration. Up to two reservations are allowed per registration; groups should contact the range for more information. If you are unable to attend, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice.

Introduction to Trapshooting

June 6 • Saturday • 5 – 8 p.m. (Experienced shotgun shooters only, ages 11 and up)

If you enjoy shooting a shotgun, but do not know the specifics of the game of trapshooting, then join us for this program. We'll learn the basics of competitive trapshooting. We'll cover appropriate guns and ammunition, rules of the game, etiquette on the field, and shoot a round for score. Firearms and ammunition will be provided, or you may bring your own 12 or 20 gauge shotgun. (Registration begins May 6.)

Beginning Archery

June 9 • Tuesday • 6 – 7:30 p.m. (Families ages fourth grade and up)
Learn the fundamentals of shooting the bow and arrow based on the Missouri National Archery in the Schools Program (MoNASP). All equipment will be provided. (Registration begins May 9.)

Trigger Time – Handgun

June 14 • Sunday • 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. (Ages 18 and up)

Trigger Time is "hands-on" personal instruction designed to make you a better marksman. There is no classroom time, just expert instruction from our staff. Participants must bring their own handguns and ammunition, at least 100 rounds. This program is for experienced handgun shooters and not appropriate for beginners or novices. (Registration begins May 14.)

Introduction to Skeet Shooting

June 16 • Tuesday • 6 – 9 p.m. and June 17 • Wednesday • 6 – 9 p.m. (Experienced shotgun shooters only, ages 11 and up)

Henges will be hosting a two (2) night skeet program. Night one is mandatory classroom training from 6 – 9 p.m. held at the Jay Henges Education Center classroom. Night two will be held at the nearby St. Louis Skeet and Trap range in Pacific, 6 – 9 p.m. Equipment and 12 and 20 gauge ammunition provided. Shooters may bring their own shotgun and/or ammunition the second night. (Registration begins May 16.)

How to Throw an Atlat!

June 18 • Thursday • 6 – 9 p.m. (Families)

Come join us for a fun and informative introduction to the atlatl, an ancient device that predates the bow and arrow. The atlatl throws darts, which are several feet long, at speeds of almost 100 miles per hour. Specialists will give a presentation on the history and use of the atlatl, and then everyone will get to try their hand at throwing darts with this unique device. Atlatls are legal for hunting many game species in Missouri, including Whitetail deer. (Registration begins May 18.)

Youth Trapshooting Camp

June 22 – 24 • Monday – Wednesday • 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

(Ages 11 – 17)

This three-morning camp is based on the game of competitive trap shooting. Participants will learn fundamentals of 16-yard singles trap-shooting. This camp is appropriate for participants from grade 6 through grade 11 that can physically shoot at least 100 targets per day. (Registration begins May 22.)

Beginning Youth .22 Rifle

Jun 27 • Saturday • 8 – 9:30 a.m. (Ages 9 – 15)

Interested young people who are first-time rifle shooters are invited to participate in this session on learning safety and the proper techniques of shooting .22 caliber rimfire rifles in a controlled safe environment. Firearms, ammunition, and safety equipment are provided. (Registration begins May 27.)

Unless otherwise indicated, youth under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult.

Busch Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

2360 Hwy D, St. Charles, MO 63304 • mdc.mo.gov/node/270

Busch Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center is closed for a total renovation.

Two new webcams allow viewers to monitor progress of the new **Busch Shooting Range.**

MDC's Design and Development Division has installed two webcams on the construction site and our web team has created a link so you can follow new developments as they unfold. Just go to http://mdc.mo.gov/node/30020.

GOOD NEWS! The newly renovated Busch Archery Range Complex located in the main Busch CA will reopen this month. The renovation includes a static line and two walk-through trails.

The static line includes:

- 14 targets arranged one every five yards between 10 and 40 yards
- One elevated platform approximately 10 feet in height with ADA access that will include six targets, one every five yards between 15 and 40 yards
- Two Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) parking spots and ADA-compliant concrete sidewalks and accesses.

Shooters using the walk-through range will enjoy new benefits, including:

- Two walk-through archery ranges; one a loop and one in-and-out configuration
- Each walk-through archery range will include 14 targets for a total of 28 targets and different shooting angles
- Different target distances from 10 60 yards will be provided on both walk through ranges. Each target lane will include a short marked distance and a longer marked distance to accommodate hunting shots and target practice For questions please contact the Busch CA regional office at 636-441-4554

Hunter Education Day Camp

June 8 – 12 • Monday – Friday • 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

(Ages 11 - 15)

Complete the Missouri Hunter Education Certification requirements along with additional training in rifle and shotgun, and other indoor and outdoor activities. Dress for the weather; bring sack lunches and drinks. Insect repellent and sunscreen may be useful. We will meet at the August A. Busch Conservation Area Regional Office classrooms. (Reservations begin May 11.)

Basic Archery

June 20 • Saturday • 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

(Ages 10 and up)

All equipment and materials will be provided, and the course will take place at the August A. Busch Conservation Area archery range. Our instructors will help all participants develop their archery skills as we cover types of bows, parts of the bow and arrow, proper stance, grip, form, release, and other important tips and techniques. (Reservations begin May 20.)



From I-64/40 take Hwy 94 south to Hwy D; turn west on Hwy D for approximately 5 miles. The area entrance is on the south side of Hwv D.

Programs are free. Call **636-441-4554** to register Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice.

Archery Day Camp

June 24 and 25 • Wednesday and Thursday • 8:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. (Ages 10 - 15)Safely participate in this fun and rewarding outdoor activity. All equipment and materials will be provided, and we will meet at the August A. Busch Conservation Area archery range. You must attend day one in order to attend day two. (Reservations begin May 25.)

Basic Shotgun

June 27 • Saturday • 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. (Ages 11 and up) We will discuss appropriate shotguns,

correct fit, gauge and ammunition selection, proper stance, mount, movement, and vision. All participants will have an opportunity to break some clay targets We will meet in the August A. Busch Conservation Area Regional Office classrooms. The shooting portion of this program is not appropriate for children who weigh less than 90 lbs. (Reservations begin May 27.)

Unless otherwise indicated, youth under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult.

Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center

11715 Cragwold Road, Kirkwood, MO 63122 • mdc.mo.gov/node/271



From I-44 east take the Watson Road exit and turn left on Geyer. Cross over the bridge and turn left on Cragwold Road. Follow one mile to the entrance. Enjoy nature exhibits, attend programs, purchase hunting and fishing permits, browse through a nature-related gift shop, and pick up free conservation brochures. Outdoors, enjoy three miles of hiking trails through oak-hickory forest.

HOURS:

Building: Tuesday – Saturday: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Area: Daily: 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. DST 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. CST

Programs are free. Call **314-301-1500** to register. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice.

Conservation Teens: Hike the Trails at Powder Valley

June 9 • Tuesday • 9 a.m. – noon (Ages 13 – 17)

This month we will hang out at Powder Valley. We will hike all the trails, with stops along the way to observe some of the many plant and animal species that make their homes here. We will finish up at the nature center, to take a look at the exhibits. Bring a sack lunch and water bottle, because you are going to be hungry after all that hiking! Combined, our trails total 2.2 paved miles, and some parts are fairly hilly. Wear comfortable walking/hiking shoes and dress to spend most of your time outside. Please meet at the nature center to begin the hike. (Reservations begin May 20.)

Boy Scout Forestry Special -Interview the Forester

June 10 • Wednesday • 3 − 5 p.m. (Boy Scouts only)

Don't miss this opportunity to meet and interview the forester before you go to summer camp. This program is specific to the Forestry merit badge: Forestry: 2 (a); 5 (a); 6; and 7. Scouts must be accompanied by an adult. (Reservations begin May 17.)

Canopy Climb with Vertical Voyages

June 26 • Friday • 9 – 11 a.m. OR 12:30 – 2:30 p.m. (Ages 8 and up)

Climb a tree in a BIG way with Vertical Voyages! Expert instructors will introduce you to the extraordinary, diverse world of trees, while teaching you the basics of tree climbing mechanics, including climbing techniques, balance, and safety. Throughout this session, climbers will have the opportunity to ascend and descend multiple times, exploring different parts of the tree's structure, limbs, and canopy. \$35 fee, registration required on-line: http://verticalvoyages.com/trips_events/canopy-climbs-powder-valley-nature-center-enroll-now

Log Lodgers

June 30 • Tuesday • 9:30 – 11 a.m. (Ages 4 and up)

A dead tree falls to the ground. Is that the end of the story or is it a new beginning? In fact, a fallen log provides a "lodging house" for many kinds of animals. Lizards sun themselves on top of the log, termites burrow into the wood, raccoons take shelter in the hollowed-out inside, and salamanders stay moist underneath it all. Learn more about this mini-ecosystem, with books, activities, and crafts. (Reservations begin June 16.)

Animal Inventions: How We Mimic Nature

June 30 • Tuesday • 10 a.m. – noon (Ages 7 – 12)

Velcro, suspended animation, skin grafts – all of these helpful human inventions were actually used by plants and animals first. In this program we will learn about some of the unusual adaptations of the natural world, and then talk about ways that humans have mimicked flora and fauna to make our own world a better place. We will hike into the forest and see if we can observe some of these resourceful plants and animals in action. (Reservations begin June 16.)

Fireflies: Summer Night Lights

June 30 • Tuesday • 7:30 – 9 p.m. (Families 7 and up)

Remember delightful, warm summer nights bounding through friends' yards to capture fireflies? Re-experience these childhood memories with your little ones as we learn more about this fascinating beetle. Then we'll take a hike into a magical forest filled with twinkling lights. (Reservations begin June 16.)

Volunteer Milestones

Barb Cerutti 200 Hours Phyllis Moehsmer 200 Hours

Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center

11715 Cragwold Road, Kirkwood, MO 63122 • mdc.mo.gov/node/271

Mud Day!

June 27 • Saturday • 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. (All ages)

Soil/dirt/mud plays an essential role in our world; it filters water, helps plants grow, provides habitat for billions of organisms, and keeps us healthy and connected to nature. Let's celebrate mud and getting dirty at this family community event, hosted by Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center and the City of Sunset Hills.

There will be information about soil and the plants and animals that live there, mud art, a mud kitchen, and piles of mud to play in. Come prepared to get muddy, and bring a towel or a change of clothes for the car ride home.

Rain or shine, the event will take place behind the Sunset Hills Athletic Fields (13555 West Watson Road.) Call Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center at 314-301-1500 for more information. Discover (or rediscover) the fun of mud! Reservations are not required.



Super Summer Series

10 - 11 a.m.

(Ages 6 and up)

Join the fun at our Super Summer Series. Families, scout, and camp groups are welcome. All programs will be conducted in the auditorium. (Reservations begin immediately.)

Reptiles Rock

June 11 • Thursday

Lizards and turtles and snakes. Oh my! What makes an animal a reptile? Find out the answers to this question and touch live reptiles in this fun program.

Mammal Mania

June 12 • Friday

That little animal is cute? It may be, but remember it is wild! We will not have live animals, but you will be able to touch mammal pelts and skulls while learning about some of the mammals living in Missouri.

Feathered Friends

June 24 • Wednesday

Take a close look at a bird's wings, feet, and beak. Learn how these body parts and other adaptations are essential for a bird to survive in the wild!

Nature: Friend or Foe?

June 25 • Thursday

Are you leery about going outside for fear of snakes, spiders, or poison ivy? You can easily learn to identify some common outdoor hazards and safely enjoy the great Missouri outdoors.

Bring your day care to the nature center this summer. Call 314-301-1500 for information to schedule a summer program.

Hallway Exhibit: Webster Groves Nature Study Society

With over 250 active members, the Webster Groves Nature Study Society (WGNSS) is one of the largest non-professional natural history organizations in Missouri. Members of WGNSS have a diverse array of interests including botany, ornithology, entomology, and conservation, much of which is focused primarily on Missouri's natural communities. Founded in 1920 by naturalists living in Webster Groves, WGNSS retains its original name for historical reasons though its membership has expanded far beyond the St. Louis area.

The WGNSS newsletter "Nature Notes" has a full description of all the activities occurring each month. For more information visit www.wgnss.org.

Columbia Bottom Conservation Area

801 Strodtman Road, St. Louis, MO 63138 • mdc.mo.gov/node/298



From I-270 north, take the Riverview Drive exit (last Missouri exit); go north 2.8 miles. Riverview Drive becomes Columbia Bottom Road at its intersection with Larimore Road. The entrance is on the right-hand side.

HOURS:

Building: Wednesday – Friday: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Saturday – Sunday: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Area: One-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset except authorized activities.

Programs are free. Call **314-877-6014** to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the wating list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice.

Explorer Day Camp

June 8 – 11 • Monday – Wednesday • 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Thursday • 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. (Ages 9 – 12)

Would you survive as an explorer? Spend four exciting days learning new skills via friendly competition at our base camp, Columbia Bottom. We will journey to other nearby conservation areas, as well. Explorers must attend all four days and bring sack lunches. Parents/guardians, please ask for an application packet when calling in. When you complete the application, return it to Columbia Bottom to be placed in our lottery drawing. Applications are due to Columbia Bottom by May 18. (Applications available May 1.)



Forest Park Office

5595 Grand Drive, St. Louis, MO 63112 • mdc.mo.gov/node/10254



From I-44 take Kingshighway north to West Pine Blvd, turn left. Follow West Pine to Lindell, turn left. Continue on Lindell past Union Drive to Cricket, turn left. Take first right onto Grand Ave. The visitor's center is on the right.

HOURS:

Monday – Friday: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Programs are free. Call **314-877-1309** to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice.

Wild in the City Day Camp

June 22 – 25 • Monday – Thursday • 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. (Ages 8 – 12)

Summer Camp this year swings full tilt to discovering nature. We'll visit a natural area of Forest Park while combining the same four activity blocks each day: exploration, species identification, observation, and outdoor skills. Camp is held outdoors with base camp at the Dennis & Judith Jones Visitor and Education Center. Participants must sign up for all four days and bring sack lunches. Completed registration, including a waiver and emergency contact sheet, must be received by June 1. Applicants will be picked for camp through a lottery system. (Applications available May 1.)

August A. Busch Memorial Conservation Area

2360 Hwy D, St. Charles, MO 63304 • mdc.mo.gov/node/300

Naturalist Training School

June 4, 11, 18 and 25 • Thursdays • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Ages 12 - 15)

Thinking of a career in conservation? Team up with our naturalists to get a head start studying resources, working on relevant projects, and job shadowing with the Naturalists from Busch and Rockwoods. Every week we will focus on a different environmental theme and most of the time will be spent outside. Each session will be held at Busch, is for students only, and includes a project to be presented on the final day, June 25. Parents are invited to attend these project presentations from 3 -4 p.m. (Registration begins May 14.)

June 4 – Birds and Herps

June 11 – Forestry

June 18 – Aquatics

June 25 – Conservation careers and final presentations

Morning Hike at Marais Temps Clair

June 6 • Saturday • 7:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

(Ages 12 and up)

Join us for an early morning 5 mile hike at the Marais Temps Clair (MTC) Conservation Area. We will be looking for resident birds and other animals that make their home at MTC. Your MDC hiking guides will provide spotting scopes to view the wildlife from a distance. Birds are most active in the early morning hours and the temperatures are usually in a comfortable range which makes this a great time of year for a hike to see what lives in the marsh habitat of MTC. Effort = Moderate for distance and uneven terrain. (Reservations begin May 22.)



From I-64/40 take Hwy 94 south to Hwy D; turn west on D for approximately two miles. The area entrance is on the north side of Hwy D.

HOURS:

Building: Monday – Friday: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Area: Daily: 4 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Programs are free. Call **636-441-4554** to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice.

Discovering Nature through Doodles and Fun

June 11 • Thursday • 10 – 11:30 a.m.

(Ages 10 and up)

You will find that there is a lot to discover when you slow down and really use your powers of observation. We will be up close and personal with bird mounts indoors and discover a bit in the world of nature outdoors, all while making interesting doodles and entries in our nature journals. We will introduce you to a variety of journaling techniques including and beyond doodles and field sketches. No art skills required, but please bring plenty of curiosity! (Reservations begin April 22.)

Conservation pays by enriching our economy and quaility of life.

Family Campout for First-timers

June 27 and 28 • Saturday 10 a.m. – Sunday 10 a.m. (Families)

Have you ever wanted to take the family camping but didn't know where to begin? Does your family want to make s'mores over a campfire and sleep under the stars? You're in luck! We will be taking 10 families to enjoy this "Great American Backyard Campout" event at Cuivre River State Park in Lincoln County. We'll supply the equipment and the expertise. You supply the family and an eagerness to discover nature. (Reservations begin May 29.)

Volunteer Milestones

Ed Horack 2,000 Hours Mellanie Sandfort 750 Hours

Rockwoods Reservation

2751 Glencoe Road, Wildwood, MO 63038 • mdc.mo.gov/node/272



From I-44 take Hwy 109 north 4 miles to Woods Avenue; left on Woods Avenue, then immediately right on Glencoe Road. From Manchester Road take Hwy 109 south 2 miles to Woods Avenue; right on Woods Avenue, then immediately right on Glencoe Road.

HOURS:

Building: Monday–Friday: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Area: Sunrise to one-half hour after sunset except authorized activities.

Programs are free. Call **636-458-2236** to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice.

Pictures of the Trail

June 6 • Saturday • 9 – 11 a.m. (Ages 7 – 12)

Learn basic outdoor photo tips as we explore Trail Among the Trees. Bring a water bottle and a camera you feel comfortable with. Cell phone cameras are acceptable. Effort = Moderate, for 1.5 mile hike on natural surface with some hills. (Reservations begin May 22.)

Twilight in the Glade

June 6 • Saturday • 8 – 9:30 p.m. (Ages 10 and up)

Many glade animals are only active once the sun goes down. Take a short evening hike at Valley View Glades in Jefferson County to look and listen for these special animals. Effort = Moderate, approximately one mile hike on natural surfaces over hilly terrain. (Reservations begin May 22.)

Beyond Basic Birding: Ground Warblers

June 13 • Saturday • 8 – 10 a.m. (Adults)

Expand your birding horizons beyond your backyard! Warblers are known for staying high in the tree canopy, but some species can be found on or near the ground. We'll search the forests of Rockwoods for three of these ground warblers: ovenbird, Louisiana waterthrush, and worm-eating warbler. Effort = Moderate, for some hiking on natural surface with elevation change. (Reservations begin May 29.)

Naturalist Training School – At August A. Busch Memorial Conservation Area

June 4, 11, 18 and 25 • Thursdays • 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

(Ages 12 – 15)

Thinking of a career in conservation? Team up with our naturalists to get a head start! Every week we will focus on a different environmental theme. Each session will be held at Busch, is for students only, and includes a project to be presented on the final day, June 25. Please see Busch page for more details. (Reservations begin May 14. Please call Busch at 636-441-4554.)

Missourians care about conserving forests, fish and wildlife.



Canoeing the Meramec River

Experience an unforgettable adventure this summer! Our naturalists will help you and your family learn paddle skills and discover nature on the Meramec River. Watch for dates and details in your July and August editions of Conservation Connections.